

This World Is Not My Home

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. –2 Peter 3:13

Have you ever thought of your own thorn in the flesh as your having to live in a place that makes you unhappy? We all have to live somewhere until we die, and, for many, it is a case of very unhappy living conditions.

Unhappy living conditions might have been Paul's thorn, because he let us know that being an apostle was the opposite of living in luxury. I think of many big-name preachers today who live in luxury.

Are you aware that there is a sense in which the main issue in both the Old Testament and the New Testament has to do with living conditions? The Old Testament stresses again and again the matter of living conditions. Moses and the people of Israel lived in a desert, and they were looking for a land flowing with milk and honey. The thrust of the Law was that if you obey, certain happy living conditions will follow. If you disobey, the opposite will follow. (See Deuteronomy 28:1-61.) In the New Testament, sadly, the Jews' expectation of the Messiah had to do entirely with living conditions. They thought that when Messiah came, He was going to change living conditions for them and set them free from Rome. This is why they couldn't cope with the thought that their Messiah would end up on a cross. Jesus warned them, for He knew exactly what they were thinking. He said in Luke 17:21, "The kingdom of God is within you." Jesus put it like that so they would understand that this present world is not all there is.

For some people, their only reward is in this present life. But Paul said, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in

the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

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